(vii) For upgrading infractructure facilities at important textile centres, a scheme 'Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme (TCIDS) has been launched.

Export of textiles to U.S.

180. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a jump of 9 per cent in the textiles exports to U.S. in April-July, 2002;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is higher than the previous year during the same period;

(d) if so, to what extent; and

(e) the steps Government proposes to take to improve the textile exports to U.S. during 2003?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI BASANGOUDA R. PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In view of the restoration of normalcy and revival of global demand, the textile exports to USA are again back on path of export growth.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) As per available DGCI&S data, the textile exports to USA during the period April-July, 2002 amounted to US$ 992.5 million as compared to export of US$ 908.3 million during the corresponding period of 2001, recording a growth of 9.3%.

Due to the slowdown in the economies of some of our major trading partners like US, September 11 events, Afghan war etc. the textile exports to USA showed a negative growth in 2001-2002.

(e) Government have been taking several steps from time to time to boost textile exports to all countries, including USA. Some of the important initiatives are:

(i) The Government has de-reserved the woven segment of readymade garment from the SSI sector. It has also raised the SSI investment limit for knitted segment to Rs. 5 crores.

(ii) The Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) has been made operational from 1-4-1999 to facilitate the modernisation and upgradation of the sector.

(iii) Weaving, processing and garment machinery, which are covered under TUFS, have been extended the facility of accelerated depreciation at the rate of 50%.This further encourage modernisation.

(iv) With a view to encouraging backward integration, the custom duty on shuttleless looms has been brought from 15% to 5%.

(v) National Institute for Fashion Technology (NIFT), its six branches and Apparel Training and Desigh Centres (ATDCs) are running various courses/programmes to meet skilled manpower requirements of textile industry especially apparel in the field of design, merchandising and marketing.

(vi) Facilities by way of eco-testing laboratories have been created to enable exporters to get the garments pre-tested for conforming to the requirements of importing countries.

(vii) The Government has launched a centrally sponsored scheme titled "Apparel Park for Export Scheme" for imparting focused

thrust for setting up of apparel manufacturing units of international standards at potential growth centres and to give fillip to exports.

(viii) For upgrading infrastructure facilities at important textile centres, a scheme 'Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme (TCIDS) has been launched.

(ix) The Textile Export Promotion Councils have been undertaking promotional measures for boosting exports of textiles to USA.

Abolishing Export Promotion Scheme EPCG

†181. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that textile exporters are requesting the Government to continue the various export promotion schemes;

(b) if so, what is Government's view and policy in this regard;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Ministry of Textiles has requested the Ministry of Finance to abolish Export Promotion Scheme EPCG; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and its effect on export?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI BASANGOUDA R. PATIL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government is of the view that the export promotion schemes work on the basic principle of remission/exemption of duty on inputs used in the export product and are thus necessary to ensure the cost competitiveness of Indian exports.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Question does not arise.

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.